

Combining the use of a simulation game with online support via Black Board

The case of a strategic management module

By Dr Hülya Öztel

Context

- CORP 3501
 - New module / Curriculum 2004
 - Delivered in Leicester, Bedford (BED), Hong Kong (HK) and Copenhagen (NB)
 - Overall intake about 450 students across sites
- Risks and challenges of using a simulation at all
 - Engaging colleagues: steep learning curve for everyone
 - Operational challenges: copyright clearance; software compatibility
 - Technical or general implementation problems:
Repercussions potentially affecting over 450 students, 4 delivery sites, credibility with partners, colleagues and management

Context (continued)

- So WHY ?
 - Madness (reason number 1)...
 - Colleagues' early engagement and enthusiasm
Involvement of all in curriculum design from the outset
thanks to:
 - TF award: allowed setting up a module development workshop with all British and Danish colleagues
 - Administrative role: Chaired Programme Board in Hong Kong (allowed to meet up o/seas colleagues re. module development matters too)

Practical aspects of the Airline Business Simulation Game

- Students
 - Airline directors
 - Compete against peers
 - Use strategic management principles
 - Make operational decisions affecting, ticket pricing, destinations, aircraft purchase or lease, maintenance, personnel management, financial management etc..
- Schedule:
 - A week in real time simulates a financial quarter
 - Weekly return of a decision set
 - Weekly feedback on outcomes of decisions
- Class size implications
 - 10 industries within which 8 to 10 companies compete against each other
 - Tutors allocated the management of particular industries, depending on timetabled tutorial groups.

Why a combined use of BB and A business simulation game

- Benefits sought from BB:
 - Existing website
 - Interactivity
 - Accurate communication
- Benefits sought from using a simulation game
 - Applied, experiential learning
 - Collaborative / androgogic learning

Androgogic teaching and learning models recognise that learners (especially adults) are highly self-directed and motivated. Androgogic learning is problem and task-centred. It values learning from peers and focuses on the learning process as much as knowledge content.

(See for example: Salmon G. (2004) E-moderating: the key to teaching and learning online, London, RoutledgeFalmer)

Screen shots from Airline

The screenshot shows a Microsoft PowerPoint window titled "Microsoft PowerPoint - [Saving Files to the Floppy.ppt]". The slide content is as follows:

Airline: Instructor's Menu

Airline Student Menu

Enter Decisions

Print A Re-Cap of your Decisions

Before you can proceed to the next button, PRINT REPORT, you must have submitted your decisions to the instructor and have received a file named Data_... from your instructor.

Click to PRINT YOUR REPORT, but only AFTER you have received a file named DATA from your instructor

Exit

The slide is part of a presentation with 35 slides, currently on slide 24. The taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications including Smi..., A:\, Mic..., int..., Mic..., and Airline... The system clock shows 16:55.

Microsoft PowerPoint - [Saving Files to the Floppy.ppt]

File Edit View Insert Format Tools Slide Show Window Help Acrobat

11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Airline: A Strategic Management Simulation

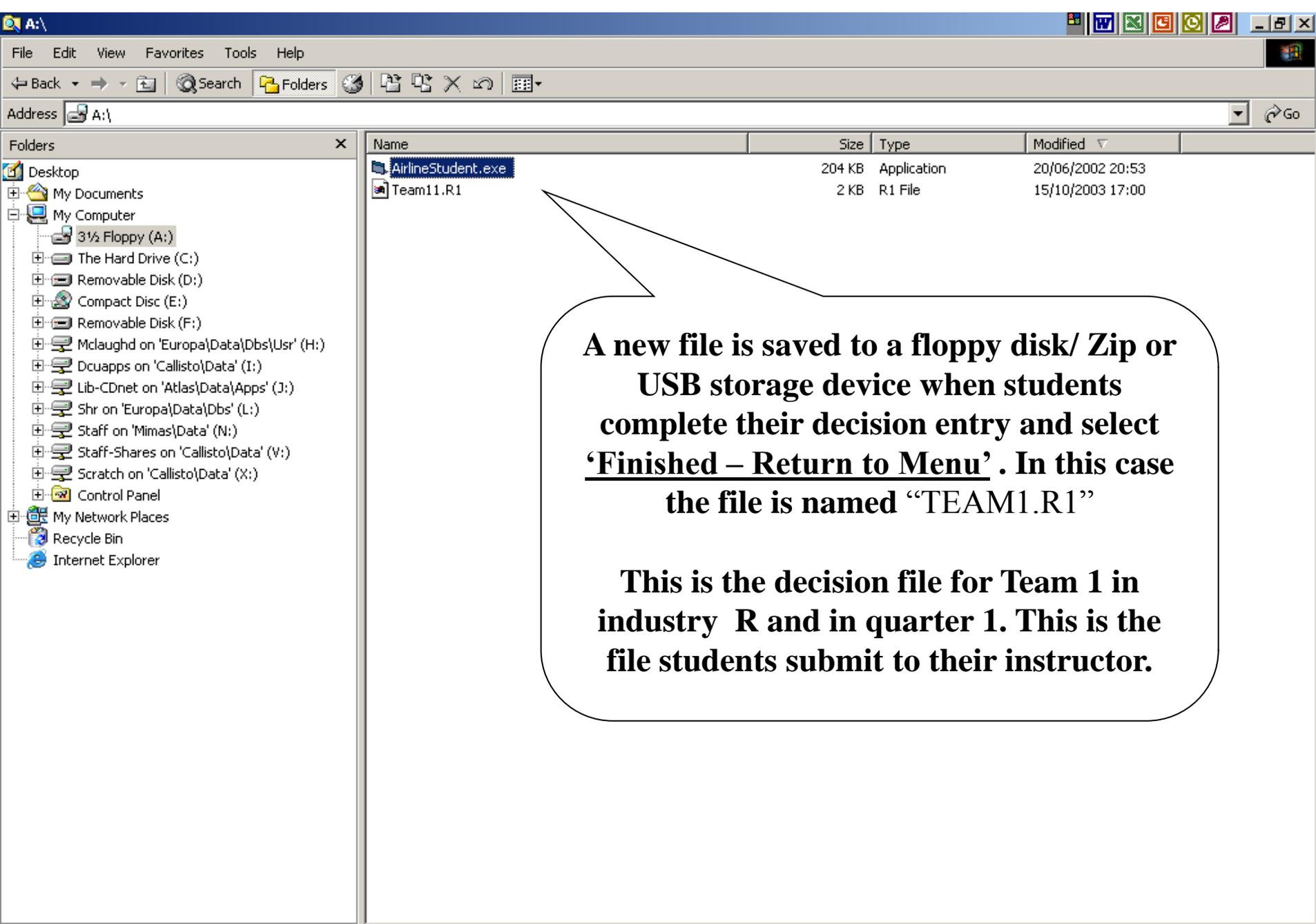
Company Number Enter Name below: Max 35 letters and spaces. Enter in quarter 1. May modify anytime.

Airline Name-No Commas>

1. Fare (in cents - no decimal)	<input type="text" value="35"/>	10. Fuel Contract (0, 1, or 2)	<input type="text" value="1"/>
2. Cabin Service (0, 1, 2, or 3)	<input type="text" value="1"/>	11. Cargo Marketing Budget (no comma) Min. \$10,000	<input type="text" value="15000"/>
3. Promotion Budget (no comma)	<input type="text" value="3000"/>	12. Corporate Social Performance Budget (no comma)	<input type="text" value="1000"/>
4. Advertising Budget (no comma)	<input type="text" value="3000"/>	13. Stock Sold in \$ (no comma)	<input type="text" value="0"/>
5. New Salespersons Hired (0 - 4)	<input type="text" value="1"/>	14. Short - Term Loan (- for payment)	<input type="text" value="0"/>
6. Employee Compensation Policy (0 - 7)	<input type="text" value="5"/>	15. Long - Term Loan (- for payment)	<input type="text" value="0"/>
7. Employee Compensation 0-7%	<input type="text" value="0"/>	16. Dividends Paid (no comma)	<input type="text" value="0"/>
8. Quality and Training Budget (no comma)	<input type="text" value="1000"/>	17. Purchase of 90 - day CD	<input type="text" value="0"/>
9. Maintenance Level (1,2,3)	<input type="text" value="2"/>		

Click for Verification Total>>

This illustrates the type of screen provided by the game. These allow students to enter their decisions.



Type: Application Size: 204 KB

204 KB

My Computer

Blackboard screen shots

Blackboard Learning System™ (Release 6) - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Home Search Favorites Media Print Mail

Address https://vle.dmu.ac.uk/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab=courses&url=/bin/common/course.pl?course_id=_292474_1 Go Links >>

 Home Help Logout

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COURSES > CORP3501-2005-Y STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT > ANNOUNCEMENTS

 **CORP3501 Strategic Management**

VIEW TODAY VIEW LAST 7 DAYS VIEW LAST 30 DAYS VIEW ALL

All Announcements

 **Tue, May 10, 2005 -- Portfolio Collection from the Student Advice Centre** Posted by Hulya Oztel
Please note that those who can not collect their portfolios on Wednesday the 11th will be able to pick them up from the student advice centre, Thursday onwards, during its normal opening hours,

Kind regards, Hulya.

 **Fri, May 06, 2005 -- Simulation: Award Winning Team** Posted by Hulya Oztel
I am pleased to announce that the award winning airline is **SKYRON**, managed by
- BASI, Kamaljit
- BHOGAITA, Priya
- GRASSMANN, Marco
- MEHMI, Amardeep
The £500 prize money will be split equally between team members and will be presented during the graduation ceremony.

Very best wishes, Hulya.

 **Fri, May 06, 2005 -- Portfolio feedback** Posted by Hulya Oztel
How and when to collect your portfolios
Peter, David and myself will be handing back the portfolios on Wednesday the 11th of May between 3.00 and 4.00 pm from DM 2.6

Powered by Blackboard

Internet

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Airline Business Simulation

[Making and Saving Decisions onto the Floppy Disk](#) (834888 Bytes)

Airline strategy statement form and other resources

[Airline strategy statement form and other resources](#)

Industry A

Tutor: **David Orton**
Competing Airlines: 7

Industry B

Tutor: **David Orton**
Competing Airlines: 8

Industry C

Tutor: **Peter Lee**
Competing Airlines: 8

Industry D

Tutor: **Peter Lee**
Competing Airlines: 8

Industry E

Tutor: **Peter Lee**
Competing Airlines: 8

Industry F

Tutor: **Alan Murphy**
Competing Airlines: 7

Industry G

Tutor: **Alan Murphv**

Click on 'Simulation game'. A list of industries with the tutor and the number of companies competing will show. Select your industry.

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Group Page: Industry H - Team 7

- ▶ [Group Discussion Board](#)
Use the Group Discussion Board for debates and conversations.
- ▶ [Send Email](#)
Send email to one or more group members.

▶ Group Members

Name	Email
Kamaljit BASI	
Priya BHOGAITA	
Marco GRASSMANN	
Amardeep MEHMI	

- Announcements
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- Decisions second quarter
- Meeting schedule - updated
- Urgent: 9th Feb Meeting
 - Re: Urgent: 9th Feb Meeting
- Meeting 9th february 2005
 - Re: Meeting 9th february 2005
 - Re: Meeting 9th february 2005
- Decision file 7.H3
- Meeting times!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
 - Re: Meeting times!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Decisions third quarter
- Meeting schedule - update 10/02/05
- company report Q3
- Decision file 7.H4
- Next meeting**
- Message to Hülya
 - Re: Message to Hülya
 - Re: Message to Hülya
- Company Report Q4**
- Decision file 7.H5
- Updated meeting schedule**
- Company report Q5**
- FYI
 - Re: FYI
- Decision Justification Form Quart...
- Decision file 7.H6
- Justification Form Quarter 5
- Justification Form Quarter 6
- Company report 6
 - Re: Company report 6
 - Re: Company report 6
- Company report Q6**

GRASSMANN, Marco	02-04-2005 13:22
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-04-2005 13:28
BASI, Kamaljit	02-08-2005 10:34
MEHMI, Amardeep	02-08-2005 10:44
MEHMI, Amardeep	02-08-2005 10:42
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-08-2005 12:44
MEHMI, Amardeep	02-08-2005 17:11
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-09-2005 11:31
MEHMI, Amardeep	02-09-2005 12:26
BASI, Kamaljit	02-09-2005 12:34
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-10-2005 22:27
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-10-2005 22:28

Students post their decision files in their private discussion board. I process these and provide them their company report for that quarter online.

GRASSMANN, Marco	02-22-2005 21:06
BASI, Kamaljit	02-23-2005 10:36
GRASSMANN, Marco	02-23-2005 11:00
MEHMI, Amardeep	02-23-2005 11:44
Oztel, Hülya	02-23-2005 13:37

Outcomes

- Students
 - Overwhelmingly positive feedback, even reluctant students engaged (evident from reflective work and tutorial presentations)
 - Amazing online engagement (mostly): jokes, exchange of prep materials, meeting arrangements etc..
 - Year 2 student reactions (unlike any other year): “*What is this Airline thing you are doing with final year students???*”
- Technical support colleagues
 - Excellent and v. valuable: Lab support, Web design and Web support

Outcomes

- Teaching team
 - Positive feedback, even from the early sceptic
 - Huge staffing problems:
 - Leicester: Ongoing illness (in total over 12 weeks missed over the year). The online presence of the material made it possible to cover for them effectively
- Me, as module leader:
 - Preparation and support well beyond the norm
 - Skill development
 - Clear sense of satisfaction, despite hurdles (student and colleague feedback)

- **Nightmares:**
 - Site 1: PT Lecturer left in the middle of the course for China
 - Site 2: Overconfident lecturer underestimated preparation needed.
 - Site 3: Tutor 'appears' last minute, I train them on the phone...
- **Positives:**
 - Skill development
 - Pedagogy: learning experience unparalleled for students and staff. Sense of fun, practical subject relevant skills, personal growth

Would I do it again?

- Yes (because I am still mad) but:
 - Need to secure excellent technical support
 - Try on a smaller cohort if at all possible (fewer things can go wrong)
 - Game selection: We selected Airline because of student ease of use (primary criteria), I knew ease of processing was important so took it into account, but I would actively seek and trial programmes/ games which allow immediate and automatic online processing and result generation (downsides – lack of control and flexibility- to be tested)

Wining team: Best Airline Business Simulation Award and Certificate

